

Gardner-Webb University

## Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University

---

Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive

Gardner-Webb Publications

---

11-21-2017


### **Non-Profit Leader Applies Principles From GWU Classes to Expand Services to Children**

Office of University Communications

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/gardner-webb-newscenter-archive>

---

# Non-Profit Leader Applies Principles From GWU Classes to Expand Services to Children

 [webpublish.gardner-webb.edu/newscenter/non-profit-leader-applies-principles-from-gwu-classes-to-expand-services-to-children/](http://webpublish.gardner-webb.edu/newscenter/non-profit-leader-applies-principles-from-gwu-classes-to-expand-services-to-children/)

Office of University  
Communications

November 21, 2017


## *Jack Weller '17 Appreciates Professors who Offered Advice and Encouragement*

When William S. “Jack” Weller retired in 2009, he was free to spend more time working at his volunteer job. Since 2001, Weller has served as president of the board of directors for the Boys & Girls Club of Cleveland County, N.C. He believes in the mission of the club, which is to enable young people, especially those who need it most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring and responsible citizens. The Club is open after-school and during school breaks to provide activities for children.

In 2014, the non-profit Club faced a crisis that threatened its existence. At the same time, Weller started classes in the Doctor of Education, Organizational Leadership (DEOL) program at Gardner-Webb University. He realized the principles he was studying could bring life back into the leadership at the Club. With the help of the GWU faculty and the Boys & Girls Club of America, the Club’s board of directors developed a three-year strategic plan to turn the Club around.



Boys & Girls Club members and Jack Weller, the president of the club’s board of directors, watch Master Gardeners Ronald Thompson and Bambi Martin explain how to plant seeds in a raised bed. (Photo courtesy of The Victorian Rose Studio)



William “Jack” Weller was honored as the 2017 North Carolina Area Council Board Member of the Year. He has served as president of the club’s board of directors since 2001. His studies in organizational leadership at GWU helped him develop a strategic plan to help the Club reach more children and teens.

“Today, the Club is serving more kids than ever before at three locations,” Weller informed. “The original Club has had a \$60,000 renovation. We opened an extension Club at Graham Elementary, and we were able to open the Mable Hamrick Whisnant Teen Center after a half-million dollar renovation. In October 2014, we were serving about 70 kids a day. Today, at the three sites, we are serving 150 children from kindergarten to high school. Our goal is to serve more kids every day.”

The doctoral classes covered policies, procedures, technology, communications, organizational structure, motivating people, and learning about one's strengths and how to use them. "Every one of these areas were applied to our situation at the Club," Weller stated. "A new computer lab was added at the main Club because of the technology plan, operation manuals were updated at all three sites, and the board became more involved in the operation of the Club. Collaboration was the key to our success in serving more kids every day."

Before enrolling in the DEOL program, Weller had taken master's level business classes at GWU so that he could serve as an adjunct professor at Cleveland Community College in Shelby, N.C. Professors in the School of Business encouraged him to finally earn the doctorate he failed to complete in his younger days. "Dr. Jim Nall (business professor), who passed away in December 2015, was my first professor at GWU. He more than anyone convinced me that education is the key to continued success," Weller reflected. "Dr. Jeffrey Hamilton was my adviser and supporter as I seemed to have more questions after every meeting. Dr. Steve Bingham taught me the need to be concise and get my point across in a brief, powerful statement. Finally, Dr. Cheryl Lutz reminded me that the kids we serve need advocates."

William

William "Jack" Weller helps Boys and Girls Club Members with an art project. (Photo courtesy of The Victorian Rose)

He continued, "Being a student in the School of Business and the School of Education, there is a common thread that defines what GWU offers graduate students—knowledgeable, caring, concerned professors who want to help you succeed. They see what you have to offer and work hard to get you to show it."

Boys and Girls Club members show off the seeds they planted

Boys and Girls Club members show off the seeds they planted.  
(Photo courtesy of The Victorian Rose Studio)